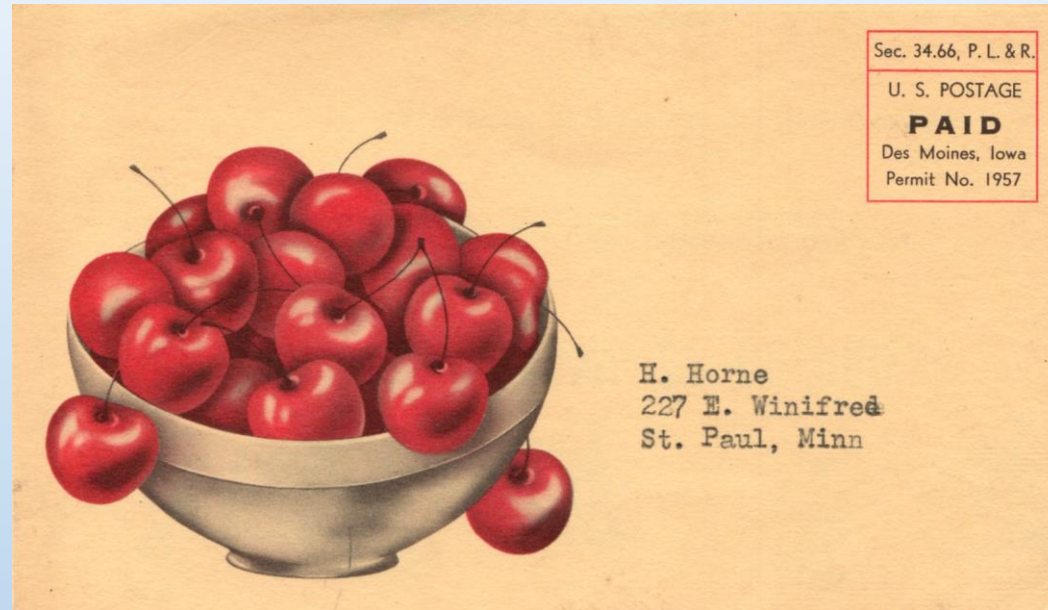


# Life is Just a \_\_\_\_\_



## [ Bowl of Cherries ]

Idioms Illustrated and Explained – Part VI Music (8 phrase)

by Tom Fortunato

idiom (n.)- an expression whose meaning can not be derived from its elements

How many times over the course of a day do you hear these? They're so common in our vernacular that we hardly take the time to recognize them with thousands in the English language alone. A few are presented here using a wide variety of material found mostly in dealer junk boxes. Don't expect to find philatelic rarities, but you will see some interesting items.

Most important is your participation! This presentation is in "fill in the blank" game format. You'll see a partial phrase at the top of each page related to the item shown along with a clue to the idiom's meaning. Just complete the phrase and keep track of your number right and wrong.

PowerPoint users have 5 seconds before a 15 second timeclock counts down then "dings," by which time an answer must be given. PDF users play on the honor system! Clicking the next page reveals the answer along with details of the origins and meaning of the idiom. Ten references were used researching these. Not all agreed, but the majority plausible response appears here.

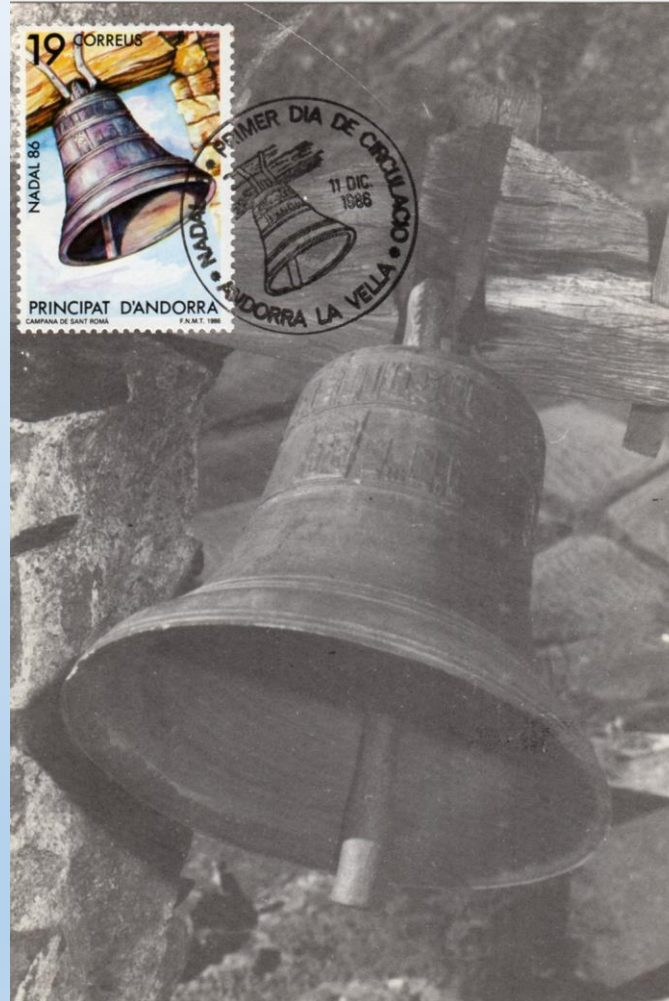
This is 1 of 7 thematic related parts (# phrases in each). Enjoy them all!

I – Animals (24) II – Food (14) III – Man (18) IV - Sports & Games (9)

V – Nature (25) VI – Music (8) VII - Pot Luck (39)

# VI- Music \_\_\_\_\_ and whistles

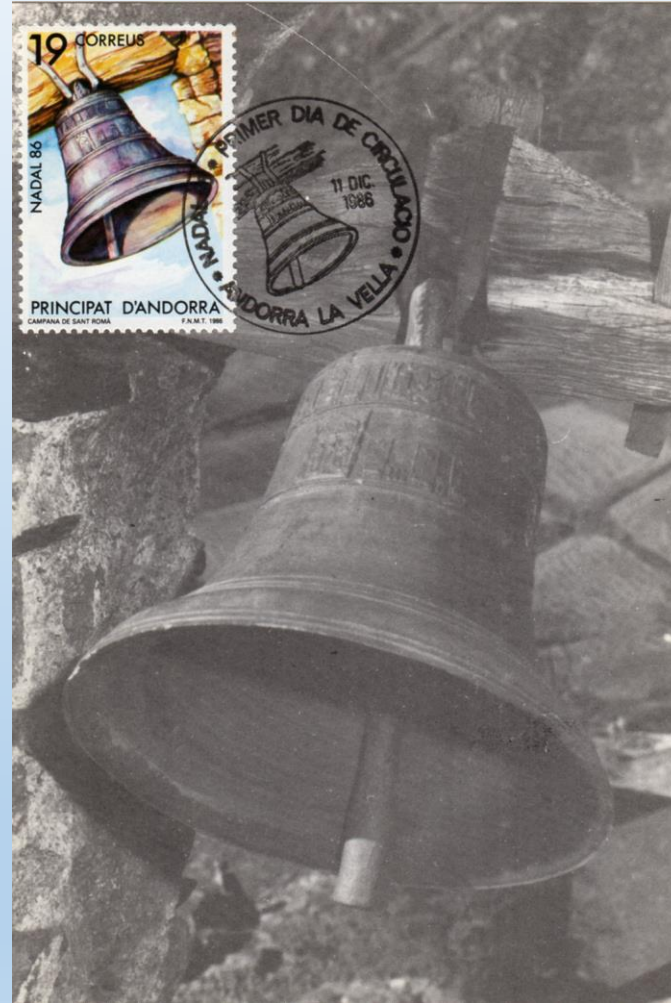
- *with all the extras*



# VI- Music      bells and whistles

- *with all the extras*

Mid-late 20th century  
American phrase  
stemming from electronic  
innovations.



- 1
- 5
- 1
- 4
- 1
- 3
- 1
- 2
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 0
- 9
- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1



# VI- Music          blow (or toot) \_\_\_\_\_

- *brag, boast about yourself*

*Greek military  
postal card*



1  
5  
1  
4  
1  
3  
1  
2  
1  
1  
1  
0  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

# VI- Music      blow (or toot) **your own horn**

- *brag, boast about yourself*



*Greek military  
postal card*

First written in 1576 by Abraham Flemming in *A Panoplie of Epistles*,  
“I will...sound the trumpet of mine own merits.”

# VI- Music \_\_\_\_\_ for your supper

- *barter for something*



# VI- Music sing for your supper

- *barter for something*



Common during medieval times in England were minstrels travelling from town to town who entertained guests in exchange for food and lodging.

1  
5  
1  
4  
1  
3  
1  
2  
1  
1  
1  
0  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1



# VI- Music fit

- *in good shape*



*printed matter ½ price rate*

Click<sup>9</sup> after bell

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

# VI- Music fit as a fiddle

- *in good shape*

Mentioned in William Haughton's 1616 *Englishman for My Money*, "This is excellent, i'faith; as fit as a fiddle." The term "fit" then meant proper. The 19th century adaptation of the phrase made it a health term.

*printed matter ½ price rate*



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

# VI- Music clear \_ \_ \_

- *healthy, completely understood*

*glassine used to cover  
a post card with glitter  
or sand, protecting  
postmarking  
equipment, paying 2  
cent letter rate instead  
of 1 cent postcard rate*





# VI- Music clear as a bell

- *healthy, completely understood*

*glassine used to cover  
a post card with glitter  
or sand, protecting  
postmarking  
equipment, paying 2  
cent letter rate instead  
of 1 cent postcard rate*



Unknown origin, but used in Thomas Newton's 1565 Latin translation of *Touchstone of Complexions*, "They be people of commonly healthy, and sound as a bell."

1  
5  
1  
4  
1  
3  
1  
2  
1  
1  
1  
0  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

# VI- Music playing \_\_\_\_\_

- *act as a follower, not a leader*





# VI- Music      playing **second fiddle**

- *act as a follower, not a leader*



From the mid-16th century. In an orchestra, the member playing first violin has a more important or difficult musical score than one playing second.

1  
5  
1  
4  
1  
3  
1  
2  
1  
1  
1  
0  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

# VI- Music      musical \_\_\_\_\_

- *change positions*



# VI- Music      musical chairs

- *change positions*



From the familiar children's game. Written of in *Trench Yarns* in 1916, "We had to get the men through the danger zone by a sort of musical-chairs rush."

1  
5  
1  
4  
1  
3  
1  
2  
1  
1  
1  
0  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

# VI- Music \_\_\_\_\_ of a dilemma

- *a difficult decision*

*cancel used for  
"skipped" mail that  
was missed by  
canceling machines*





# VI- Music on the horns of a dilemma

- *a difficult decision*

*cancel used for  
"skipped" mail that  
was missed by  
canceling machines*



Refers to sharp, pointed horns of an animal. From 1548's *Apophthegmes* by Nicholas Udall, "Thy forked question, which the sophisters call a horned question, because that to whether of both parties a body shall make a direct answer, he shall run on the sharp point of the horn."



This is the end of Part VI- Music.

If you liked this presentation,  
try one of the other parts!

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exhibit online at:

<http://www.rpastamps.org/presentations>